Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over International Publication Number WO 00/32843 to Lee et al.("Lee") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,987,127 to Dickie et al.("Dickie"). The Examiner alleges that Lee discloses a surface-treated steel sheet for fuel tanks wherein the steel sheet is cold-rolled and has a zinc or zinc-based alloy plating layer formed on the steel sheet and a chromate film coated on the zinc or zinc-based plating layer, which is then coated with a resin coating layer. The Examiner maintains that although Lee does not specifically teach that the resin coating layer contains 0.5 to 3.0 phr of phosphoric ester, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to add 0.5 to 1.0 phr of a phosphoric acid ester to the composition of Lee in view of the teachings of Dickie. Dickie is said to teach the addition of esters of phosphoric acid to a coating composition to improve the adhesion between the coating and a metal substrate.

Applicants submit that the present application claims priority to Korean Application Serial No. KR 1999/50110, filed on November 12, 1999. An English translation of said priority document is submitted herewith. Since International Application Serial No. PCT/KR99/00722, filed by Lee on November 30, 1999, was not published until June 8, 2000, which is later than the November 12, 1999 priority date for the present application, Lee cannot serve as a prior art reference.

With regard to the disclosure of Dickie, Applicants respectfully submit that Dickie differs significantly from the disclosure of the present invention. Specifically, an object of Dickie involves the addition of corrosion resistance and abrasion resistance

to metal surfaces used for trim or brightwork on the exterior of an automobile. (*See* column 1, lines 14-26.) A main component of the coating composition disclosed by Dickie is a solvent-soluble vinyl polymer. (*See* column 1, lines 49-67.)

In contrast, a stated objective of the present invention is adding cosmetic corrosion resistance and fuel corrosion resistance to the fuel tank of an automobile (*see* specification, page 4, lines 11-18), and a main component of the coating composition used in the present invention is a water-soluble phenoxy resin (*see* specification, page 3, lines 11-12). In light of the differences between the claims of the present application and the disclosure of Dickie as well as the removal of Lee as a reference, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1-4 of the present application are patentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over International Publication No. WO 00/32843 to Lee in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,987,127 to Dickie.

Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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